6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India Kashmir AYI

241 snow on the mountains is the cultivator's anxiously observed guide to the chances of the ensuing season. The agricultural calendar is roughly as follows:

[221]

March	ploughing, manuring with dung of winter
April	fertilising with turves from stream-banks; paddy, linseed, and sesamum sown (kharif)
May–June	rape harvest; *grim* sown (above 7000 ft)
June–July	paddy weeding; barley and wheat harvest (rabi)
July–Aug.	linseed harvest
Aug.–Sept.	ploughing for rabi wheat and barley; *grim* harvest
Sept.	ploughing for rape; rape sown
Sept.–Oct.	paddy and sesamum harvest; wheat sown
Oct.–Dec.	barley and later wheat sown.

January and February are dead months. The shortness of the *grim* growing season will be noted.

[226] The lakes have a peculiar economy of their own. "They bear innumerable boats, from which fish are caught in skilfully manipulated throw-nets. Weeds are dredged up to provide fodder for the cattle, and water chestnuts and lotus roots for human food. And, as if such fertility were inadequate, sods of marshy earth are bound together into rafts heavy with manure, and these are moored in rows across the swamp to form floating gardens, so that the boundary between earth, air, and water is made fruitful and bears the fiery red fruits of tomato plants." [18]

More important, if less picturesque, is the formation of new land on the shallow lake-margins by planting willows in the water and filling up the compartments so formed with boatloads of lake-mud and weeds. These *demb* lands are used not only for fruit and vegetables, but even for rape, maize, and tobacco.

The orchards of Kashmir provide the most valuable of its exports after timber; most temperate and sub-tropical fruits and nuts are grown. The most important fruit is probably the apricot, and the walnut is a source of [274] lighting and cooking oil as well as a food. One of the main attractions of Kashmir to hard-drinking Moguls like Babur and Jahangir was its wine, but the vine has no longer its ancient fame, despite the establishment of a state vineyard with Bordeaux stocks—one development which is not likely to appeal to the future rulers of Kashmir, be they *Indian* or Pakistani. Even [243] hops have been introduced, doubtless to be withdrawn again now. Finally we may note the cultivation on one or two *karewas* of the saffron crocus, in demand as a condiment and as a pigment for Indian sect-marks. Minor crops include opium poppy and the recently introduced pyrethrum.[19]

[18] G. E. Hutchinson, *The Clear Mirror* (1936), 102.

[19] Most of the details in this section are drawn from the full and fascinating account in the *Gazetteer* (41–63).